

requested. Applicants further request examination of claims 12, 15, 16 and 21-23, as allowed claim 1 is generic and reads on all of the non-elected species, B through N, identified in the Restriction/Election Requirement dated April 14, 2005.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,961,548 to Shmulewitz. Applicants respectfully traverse that rejection. Shmulewitz discloses a bifurcated graft that has a "helical coil **20** having laterally and longitudinally offset coil portions **21** and **22** covered with biocompatible graft material **30**" designed to shunt blood to one of the iliac vessels (Shmulewitz 3:35-40). Shmulewitz discloses a helical coil, but in no way discloses "positioning the prosthetic branch and attaching the prosthetic branch to the prosthetic trunk so as to provide a helical fluid passage," as claimed in Claim 31. The stent disclosed in Shmulewitz does not have a "helical fluid passage," but merely has a straight fluid passage with helical supports. (See, e.g., Figs. 1, 2 and 6.) Furthermore, the fact that the support is helical has no relation to the positioning of the "second section **15**"; therefore, it cannot meet the limitation "positioning . . . and attaching the prosthetic branch. . . so as to provide a helical passage." Thus, Shmulewitz does not anticipate Claim 31. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn for these reasons.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 31 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,620,202 to Bottcher et al. Applicants respectfully traverse that rejection. Bottcher discloses "medical stents for facilitating drainage of fluid" including, for example, a stent for draining urine from the kidney to the bladder. (Bottcher 3:33-40.) While a portion of the Bottcher stent can be in the shape of a helix (314), it is clear that the stent disclosed in that patent does not teach or suggest "positioning the prosthetic branch and attaching the prosthetic branch to the prosthetic trunk so as to provide a helical fluid passage." No prosthetic trunk is shown in Bottcher, nor is any motivation expressed in Botcher to

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attach the helical portion of the stent to a prosthetic trunk. Moreover, the Examiner's comment that "the coil is 'attached' to the shaft of the stent 210 at the neck" and her reference to Col. 1, lines 51-54 misses the point that regardless of any "attachment" there is still only one continuous, non-branched fluid passage in Bottcher, not a trunk and a branch. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn for these reasons.

Having carefully addressed all of the rejections of the Examiner in the July 29, 2005 Office Action, it is respectfully asserted that the invention is both novel and non-obvious over the cited prior art documents. Allowance of Claim 31 is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the above submissions in more detail, the Examiner is asked to please call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Finally, Applicants thank Examiner Suzette J. Gherbi for the interview she held with Samuel Shehadeh, Esq. on July 20, 2005, in which the Shmulewitz reference was discussed. Ms. Gherbi asserted that claim 31 read on Shmulewitz; Mr. Shehadeh countered that it did not.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Shehadeh', written over a horizontal line.

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